

# Implementation Board Business Meeting Agenda



**Meeting Date: June 14, 2023**

Time	Item
2:00pm – 2:10pm	<p><b>Welcome and Settling In</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome, Roll Call of Implementation Board- Members, Mission Statement, and Theory of Change <b>(Simha Reddy)</b></li> <li>2. Land Acknowledgement <b>(Glen Pinkham)</b></li> <li>3. Public Comment Sign-Up <b>(Simha Reddy)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public Comment will be 15 minutes</li> <li>- Public Comment must directly address a portion of the agenda. -</li> <li>- Each person will have 1 minute for public comment.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><i><b>Result:</b> Everyone feels welcomed and participants are confirmed.</i></p>
2:10pm – 2:15pm	<p><b>Consent Agenda</b> <b>(Simha Reddy)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. May 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes <b>[Pg. 3-4]</b></li> <li>2. May 2023 Special Meeting Minutes <b>[Pg. 5]</b></li> </ol> <p><i><b>Result:</b> Board members vote to approve/disapprove.</i></p>
2:15pm – 2:20pm	<p><b>CEO Updates</b> <b>(Helen Howell)</b></p> <p><i><b>Result:</b> CEO Helen Howell provides updates to the Board.</i></p>
2:20pm – 2:25pm	<p><b>Chair Updates</b> <b>(Simha Reddy)</b></p> <p><i><b>Result:</b> Chair Reddy provides updates to the Board.</i></p>

2:25pm – 2:40pm	<b>Public Comment</b> (Austin Christoffersen)  <i><b>Result:</b> Public comment is heard.</i>
2:40pm – 3:00pm	<b>Contract Briefing &amp; Discussion</b> (Meg Barclay & Tiffany Brooks)  1. Memo [Pg. 6] 2. Presentation [Attached Separately] <i><b>Result:</b> The IB will receive a briefing on the current state of contracts within the KCRHA.</i>
3:00pm – 3:30pm	<b>Ombuds Charter</b> (Katara Jordan)  1. Memo [Pg.7-8] 2. Ombuds Charter [Pg.9-15] 3. Ombuds Grievances [Pg.16-17] <i><b>Result:</b> The IB will receive a presentation on the Ombuds charter and will discuss the charter and potential amendments.</i>
3:35pm – 3:55pm	<b>Officer Elections</b> (John Chelminiak)  1. Election Position Descriptions [Pg.18] <i><b>Result:</b> The Implementation Board will elect two Co-Chairs, a Treasurer, and Secretary.</i>
3:55pm – 4:00pm	<b>Adjourn</b> (Simha Reddy)  <i><b>Result:</b> The Implementation Board will adjourn.</i>

**Board Chair:** Simha Reddy

**Clerk:** Austin Christoffersen

**June 14th, 2023 (2:00pm – 4:00pm)**

**Mission:** The mission of the King County Regional Homelessness Authority is to significantly decrease the incidence of homelessness throughout King County by centering customer voices to respond to needs and eliminate inequities.

**Theory of Change:** If we create a homeless response system that centers on customer voice, then we will be able to focus on meeting needs and eliminating inequities, in order to end homelessness for all.

**NOTICE:** The Board can be called in to Executive Session as needed, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110

## Implementation Board

### King County Regional Homelessness Authority

#### KCRHA Implementation Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

2:00pm to 4:00pm

Chair: Simha Reddy

#### Roll Call:

Last	First	Present	Absent	Notes
Anderson	Carey	X		
Caminos	Nate	X		
Carvalho	Paula	X		
Chelminiak	John	X		
Maritz	Ben	X		
McHenry	Gordon	X		
Ramos	Michael	X		
Pattenaude	Damien	X		
Rankin	Sara	X		Departed Early- Floyd Alt.
Reddy	Simha	X		
Ross	Christopher	X		
Spotted Elk	Juanita	X		
Brandon	Okesha	X		
Floyd	Zsa Zsa	X		Alternate- Rankin

*A quorum is present with 12 members*

#### **Land Acknowledgement – Simha Reddy**

#### **Consent Agenda – Simha Reddy**

- Approval of the April 2023 Meeting Minutes
  - Motioned by Member Rankin, Seconded by Member Anderson.
    - Consent Agenda passed unanimously via voice vote.

#### **CEO Update– Marc Dones**

- Update on Contracts Process as of day 156 contracts finalized, 27 are with KCRHA for review, 32 are with service providers for review.
- \$15.3 Million has been paid out through 351 invoices.
- Average time to process from invoice submission to payment if five days.

#### **Public Comment – Austin Christoffersen**

- Andrew Castin
- Anitra Freeman
- Josh Castle
- Gabriel De Los Angeles
- Shalimar Gonzalez
- Elemo Mussa

## Implementation Board

### King County Regional Homelessness Authority

#### ***Master Lease Agreement Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2023-06—Jeff Simms***

- Motion by Member Anderson, Seconded by Member Maritz
  - Passed Unanimously via Roll Call vote

#### ***Five Year Plan Update— Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Marc Dones, & John Chelminak***

#### ***Bylaw Discussion and Resolution 2023-01—Implementation Board***

- Motion by Member Maritz, Seconded by Member Brandon.
  - 2023-01 passed unanimously via roll call as amended.
- Amendment A: Changing the minimum requirement of Board members from 1 to 2.
  - Introduced by Member Ross
    - Aye: CAMINOS, CARVALHO, CHELMINAK, MARITZ, SPOTTED ELK, MCHENRY JR., REDDY, FLOYD, ROSS, BRANDON
    - Nay: PATTENAUDE
    - Abstain:
      - Amendment A PASSED with 10 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 Abstention
- Amendment B: Changing the term “Coalition of Lived Experience” To “Lived Experience Coalition” terms to kept capitalized.
  - Introduced by Member Maritz—Sponsored by Member Rankin
    - Aye: MARITZ, SPOTTED ELK, BRANDO, REDDY, FLOYD
    - Nay: CAMINOS, CARVALHO, CHELMINAK, MCHENRY JR., PATTENAUDE, ROSS
    - Abstain:
      - Amendment B FAILED with 5 Ayes, 6 Nay, 0 Abstention

#### ***Officer Elections—John Chelminak***

- Motion to move the Officer Election to the next IB Regularly Scheduled Meeting
  - Motioned by Member Chelminak, Seconded by Member Ross

#### ***Executive Session—Implementation Board***

#### ***Meeting Adjourned – 4:47pm***

## Implementation Board

### King County Regional Homelessness Authority

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Rankin	Sara	X		Departed Early- Floyd Alt.
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Ross	Christopher	X		
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Brandon	Okesha	X		
Floyd	Zsa Zsa	X		Alternate- Rankin

*A quorum is present with 12 members*

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## Implementation Board

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    - Abstain:
      - Amendment B FAILED with 5 Ayes, 6 Nay, 0 Abstention

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#### ***Executive Session—Implementation Board***

#### ***Meeting Adjourned – 4:47pm***



## Memorandum

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**Date:** June 7, 2023  
**To:** Implementation Board Members  
**From:** Meg Barclay, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
Tiffany Brooks, Assistant CAO for Finance  
**CC:** Helen Howell, Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
Anne Burkland, Chief of Staff  
Austin Christoffersen, Clerk of the Authority  
**Subject:** Briefing: 2023 Contract Renewals

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### **I. Current Status of Contracts**

We are pleased to report that all but three of our 210 2023 renewal contracts with service providers are fully completed. We expect two of the remaining three will be signed by Friday, June 9. The last contract has not received a response from the provider since February.

\$113 Million in 2023 funding is included in these contracts, the three remaining contracts amount to \$114,000.

As of today, \$40.4 million in 2023 funding has been paid to providers through invoices. Invoices are paid on a rolling basis throughout the year. The average time from invoice receipt to payment is five days.

### **II. Next Steps**

To ensure a smooth and streamlined contracts process in the future, KCRHA is taking the following steps:

- Hiring additional accounting and finance staff
- Conducting a process improvement exercise with providers and staff to be completed by this Fall. Engaging a consultant who specializes in the FLUXX contract management system to provide direct assistance to providers and RHA staff and facilitate system improvements.

The attached presentation provides an in-depth update on 2023 Contract renewals.



## Memorandum

**To:** KCRHA Implementation Board

**From:** Katara Jordan, Chief Ombudsperson

**CC:** Helen Howell, Interim CEO; Anne Burkland, Chief of Staff

**Subject:** Ombuds Office Charter

**Date:** June 7, 2023

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### I. Recommendation

The Ombuds Office staff recommends that the Implementation Board approves the Ombuds Office Charter (“the Charter”), which relays the standards of practice, limitations, and responsibilities by which the Ombuds Office will operate and conduct itself.

### II. Background

The Charter is a document specifically constructed to define the role and scope of the Ombuds Office’s responsibilities as per Section 6 of the Interlocal Agreement. The purpose of the Charter is to lay out a shared understanding of the functionality of the Ombuds Office amid KCRHA and the homelessness response system.

As of March 2022, the Ombuds Office Charter has undergone several revisions to reflect feedback that the Ombuds Office staff has received from KCRHA staff, community members who have contacted the Ombuds Office, and people with not only lived experiences of homelessness but also extensive knowledge working within the King County Homelessness Response System.

Resultantly, the Charter:

- Clarifies the independence of the Ombuds Office by reiterating that the Ombuds reports directly to the Implementation Board.
- Reflects that the Ombuds Office’s partnership with the community is not exclusive to one community partner or organization.
- Establishes an appeals process that engages the Implementation Board’s Executive Team in reviewing and enacting conclusive decisions surrounding contested investigation findings.
- Ensures that the Ombuds Office’s “Equity and Justice” standard of practice is not solely limited to racial justice; indeed, it recognizes that all people experiencing homelessness possess individual needs and that the Ombuds Office should strive to meet those needs with a greater degree of specificity.
- Incorporates feedback from trans and gender-diverse persons to be mindful of how certain actors have used and co-opted standards and practices (e.g., restorative justice) to perpetuate harm, transphobia, and trans-antagonism.





- Includes a reference to the Ombuds Office Grievance Policy, which will be included in the exhibits of all KCRHA contracts going forward.

### **III. Concerns not addressed by the Charter.**

Independence, impartiality in conducting inquiries and investigations, and confidentiality are three intrinsic core elements of an Ombuds Office. However, the Ombuds Office cannot ensure the confidentiality of those who contact the office seeking assistance or to report a complaint as the Ombuds Office is a division within KCRHA, a public agency directed to follow Washington State's Public Records Act. While certain exemptions may apply on a case-by-case basis, constituents have shared with Ombuds Office staff that this creates a chilling effect. Therefore, it is likely that front-line staff at organizations and residents of KCRHA programs will feel reticent about contacting the Ombuds Office or cooperating with the office during investigations out of fear of potential retaliation. The Ombuds Office staff invites the Implementation Board to work in conjunction with the Ombuds Office to contemplate structural policy changes to better protect the information of those who establish contact with the Ombuds Office. One must note that this is particularly important given that the principal goal of the Ombuds Office is to effectively serve our unhoused neighbors, participants, and staff of KCRHA-funded programs.

# **Ombuds Office Charter**

## **King County Regional Homelessness Authority**

Publication date: TBD 2023

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- VII. Safety from Retribution or Retaliation for Using the Ombuds Office
- VIII. Reporting
- IX. Appointment and Removal from Office
- X. Conflict of Interest
- XI. Amendment or Revocation of Charter
- XII. Approval and Effective Date

## **I. Introduction and Background**

This document defines and clarifies the standards of the Ombuds Office within the context of the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA). The intent of this document is to:

- a. Educate the community about the history and role of the Ombuds Office.
- b. Articulate the practices, principles, and standards of the Ombuds Office.
- c. Ensure the Ombuds Office operates in a manner consistent with this charter.

## **II. History of the KCRHA Ombuds Office**

In 2019, the City of Seattle, King County, and All Home (the former county-wide HUD-funded Continuum of Care) partnered with the National Innovation Service (NIS) to redesign the local homelessness response system. During this process, NIS collaborated with our unhoused neighbors, people with lived experience of homelessness, providers, businesses, philanthropists, and public sector stakeholders to develop the KCRHA.

As part of this system redesign, our unhoused neighbors advocated for creating an ombuds office to help center the voices of people with lived experience in the KCRHA's provision of services to those experiencing homelessness. Out of these community conversations emerged the three core functions of the Ombuds Office:

- a. Providing quality support to people experiencing homelessness in navigating, accessing, and using KCRHA services.
- b. Coordinating ongoing engagement with people experiencing homelessness and frontline service providers to ensure consistent improvements to KCRHA services.
- c. Driving systems change by centering the voices of people with lived experience and advocating for system improvements.

## **III. Purpose of the Ombuds Office**

The purpose of the Ombuds Office is to promote public confidence in the KCRHA's ability to serve people experiencing homelessness effectively, efficiently, and equitably. Aligned with this purpose, the Ombuds Office employs a hybrid approach combining diverse ombuds models—classical, organizational, and advocacy—with principles of equity to best meet the needs of the communities served by the KCRHA and the larger homelessness response system.

## **IV. Standards of Practice**

### **a. Equity and Justice**

The Ombuds Office is committed to eliminating institutional inequities within our homelessness response system. It aims to do this by centering the experiences of our unhoused neighbors with intersecting identities, including but not limited to queer, trans, black, and indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, and people living with disabilities. The Ombuds Office will center these voices by regularly engaging with communities across the King County region, elevating community feedback to KCRHA

leadership and governance, and partnering with community members to develop solutions to their inquiries and concerns.

The Ombuds Office also works closely with our unhoused neighbors and KCRHA constituents to ensure their active involvement as informed partners. With their involvement, the office holds itself, the KCRHA, and the homelessness response system accountable, by centering the voices of people who are currently experiencing or have previously experienced homelessness, in the provision of quality support, coordination of ongoing engagement, and improvement of KCRHA services through systems change.

The office's approach centers on the continuous improvement of the homelessness services offered, aiming to ensure responsiveness, equity, and effectiveness in meeting the diverse needs of marginalized communities affected by homelessness.

**b. Independence**

The Ombuds Office recognizes and upholds independence as a core characteristic of its operations fundamental to its ability to freely investigate complaints within its jurisdiction and effectively promote public accountability. At the same time, a distinction is made between independence and isolation. Isolation runs counter to the core characteristics that guide the Ombuds Office's standards of practice, which require a collaborative approach between KCRHA staff, unhoused neighbors, and other community members to accomplish its purpose. It is also the Ombuds Office's intent to model interdependent and dignity-centered solutions.

While existing within the KCRHA, the Ombuds Office remains independent to the highest degree possible in structure and function in the following ways:

- i. The chief ombuds reports directly and independently to the Implementation Board.
- ii. Ombuds team members do not hold any other KCRHA positions.
- iii. The Ombuds Office has sole discretion to initiate and pursue complaints and inquiries.
- iv. The Ombuds Office has access to all KCRHA records as well as its contractor records to the extent permitted by law.
- v. The chief ombuds has the authority to select ombuds staff and manage the Ombuds Office budget and operations.
- vi. The Ombuds Office has the authority to establish and engage an ad-hoc advisory group, which may or may not include KCRHA staff and other stakeholders, to provide guidance on Ombuds Office activities, findings, and recommendations.

**c. Impartiality in Context**

The Ombuds Office endeavors to receive and review each complaint and treat all parties without bias or prejudice. At the same time, it acknowledges that blanket statements of neutrality, fairness, and impartiality can harm individuals and groups that have been

historically marginalized and can perpetuate institutional racism and inequities. The ombuds staff commits to challenging its preconscious and conscious thought patterns that result in bias and prejudice and “actively intervene to counter personal and institutional behavior that perpetuate oppression” (Derman-Sparks, 1989).

**d. Confidentiality**

As a public entity, the Ombuds Office is required to comply with Washington State’s Public Records Act (PRA).<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Ombuds Office cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality in every situation. The Ombuds Office will not reveal the identity of any person contacting the office to file a complaint, or to disclose any information provided in confidence to support a complaint, except to address an imminent risk of serious harm or when required to do so by law. If necessary to help resolve a complaint, it is at the Ombuds Office’s discretion to disclose information that does not reveal the identity of the source. That said, to the greatest extent possible, the Ombuds Office will try to get an individual’s express permission before disclosing any identifying information. The Ombuds Office will also explain to people who contact the office the implications of sharing information they may consider sensitive.

**V. Jurisdiction, Scope of Services, and Core Functions of the Ombuds Office**

**a. Jurisdiction**

The Ombuds Office is dedicated to improving the quality of services for people experiencing homelessness by helping community members navigate the homelessness response system, resolve issues, and escalate emergency calls and by proactively engaging with the community to gather system feedback. The Interlocal Agreement for the Establishment of the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (ILA)<sup>2</sup> authorizes the Ombuds Office to serve the following groups:

- i. Community members receiving services from an KCRHA provider or contracted program.
- ii. Providers who contract with the KCRHA to provide outreach, shelter, rapid re-housing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, prevention efforts, and other interventions (collectively referred to as “homeless services”).
- iii. Employees (pursuant to Section VI of this charter), funders, and contractors of the KCRHA.

**b. Scope**

The ILA authorizes the Ombuds Office to perform the following functions:

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<sup>1</sup> The Washington Public Records Act requires that all public records maintained by state and local government agencies be made available to all members of the public with very narrow statutory exemptions. (See RCW Chapter 42.56 RCW)

<sup>2</sup>Interlocal Agreement Article IX Section 6

- i. Gather feedback from our unhoused neighbors and people with lived experience to improve the KCRHA's operations and outcomes.
- ii. Ensure ease of contact—for community members—and provide appropriate resources to resolve concerns.
- iii. Implement strategies to collect, investigate, and respond to complaints and concerns about service delivery, policies, program administration, or other activities overseen by the KCRHA.
- iv. Receive complaints from employees and contract holders.
- v. Develop methods to respond to complaints or concerns in an equitable, impartial, and efficient manner.
- vi. Investigate complaints and issue findings, collect and analyze aggregate complaints data, and partner with KCRHA leadership, the Implementation Board, employees, and community members to design and recommend improvements to service, funding, and oversight.

**c. Core Functions**

The Ombuds Office performs dual advocacy roles: on the one hand, as individual advocates that partner with constituents to address harm and, on the other hand, as advocates for systemic change by raising concerns to KCRHA leadership, including program and grants management.

The office's approach is designed to support people experiencing homelessness, the KCRHA, its employees, and the larger service provider community to resolve complaints in a way that addresses harm and improves the quality of homeless services.

**i. Constituent Contacts**

The Ombuds Office addresses three types of constituent contacts: (i) concerns and comments, (ii) support and system navigation inquiries, and (iii) formal complaints.

1. Concerns and Comments: The Ombuds Office receives concerns and comments from community members and attempts to respond and resolve them informally.

Even if a concern or comment does not require a formal response, the Ombuds Office may still collect demographic information confidentially to inform the delivery of KCRHA services.

2. Support and System Navigation Inquiries: The Ombuds Office responds to questions about KCRHA services and individual rights within the system and connects people to the appropriate resources to resolve their needs.

For issues that require more support or that cannot be resolved by providing information or a referral, the Ombuds Office will assist the ombuds contact

to resolve the issue through research, coordination, and system navigation support.

3. Formal Complaints: The Ombuds Office receives and attempts to resolve formal complaints from ombuds contacts about contracted or proposed homelessness services and actions (or lack thereof) by the KCRHA, its employees, or contracted providers when people experiencing homelessness are affected. Formal complaints may be individual or systemic.
  - a. Individual Complaints: An individual complaint is an issue that an ombuds cannot resolve through either of the following means: providing information, a referral, or system navigation help or engaging in the initial stages of conflict intervention. The Ombuds Office reviews and logs individual complaints to identify any patterns that may indicate systemic issues.
    - i. Individual complaints are addressed in accordance with the *Ombuds Office Grievance Policy* and may include a formal investigation. The Ombuds Office will offer the following recommendations to assist the KCRHA in addressing substantiated individual complaints:
      1. Negotiation: Parties are supported by ombuds staff in engaging with each other to resolve the matter peacefully.
      2. Conciliation: Parties engage with ombuds staff to ensure the negotiations remain peaceful.
      3. Mediation: A peaceful, voluntary, and non-adversarial resolution between parties is facilitated by ombuds staff.
    - ii. If the parties cannot agree or the circumstances require, individual complaints may result in a formal investigation and findings report, which includes recommendations to improve performance, policies, and procedures or modify practices, which will be shared with KCRHA leadership and grants and program management as applicable.
  - b. Systemic Complaints: A systemic complaint is a complaint or multiple complaints that bring attention to a significant concern regarding service provision in the homelessness response system. Systemic investigations may derive from a single complaint or a group of complaints or be initiated by the Ombuds Office.

- i. The Ombuds Office screens all systemic complaints to determine their priority and whether they should be pursued.
- ii. During the screening process, the Ombuds Office considers factors such as seriousness, urgency, the number of people affected, community concern, whether the complaint fits within the Ombuds Office's priorities, and whether another agency or authority should investigate the matter.
- iii. Systemic complaints often result in a findings report, which includes recommendations to improve performance, policies, and procedures or modify practices, which will be shared with KCRHA leadership and grants and program management as applicable.

c. Appeals Process

- i. Any party to an Ombuds Office investigation may appeal the findings and recommendations of the findings report.
- ii. Please refer to the *Ombuds Office Grievance Policy* for information on how to file an appeal.
- iii. All contested findings will be shared with the Executive Team of the Implementation Board to review the evidence and make a final decision.

ii. **Community Engagement**

The Ombuds Office will proactively engage and establish a regular cadence with KCRHA constituents across the region to gather general and targeted feedback to inform trends and questions.

iii. **Data Collection**

- 1. Intake. The Ombuds Office collects demographic information such as race and ethnicity, gender identity, location, referral source, and outcome of interventions. The office maintains case notes to help document ombuds' interactions and how the office addresses issues and concerns.
- 2. Annual Reports. The Ombuds Office uses information collected during the intake process, investigations, and community engagement to inform an annual report on system trends and responses to community feedback.

**VI. Authority and Limits of the Ombuds Office**

The Ombuds Office is intended to supplement, not replace, the KCRHA's formal compliance and complaint channels, such as those created by People Operations and the Chief Administrative Officer. Employees of the KCRHA are encouraged to use the Ombuds Office when any personnel issues arise for confidential coaching and support on how to use the previously mentioned channels effectively.



Nothing in this current section should be used to prevent an employee from raising a concern about service delivery, policies, program administration, or any other activities overseen by the KCRHA.

Furthermore, the Ombuds Office does not, nor should it be expected to:

- a. Address or investigate issues outside its jurisdiction.
- b. Make, change, or set aside the law or policy or administrative or managerial decisions.
- c. Make binding decisions or determine rights.
- d. Directly compel an entity or any person to implement the office's recommendations.
- e. Receive notice on behalf of the KCRHA.
- f. Address any issues arising within the purview of any existing federal, state, or local labor or employment law, rule, or regulation.
- g. Investigate matters that are currently in litigation or covered by a collective bargaining agreement or complaints related to employee or applicant discrimination.

#### **VII. Safety from Retribution or Retaliation for Using the Ombuds Office**

Contacting the Ombuds Office is entirely voluntary. Any group within its jurisdiction has the right to contact the Ombuds Office without fear of retaliation from the KCRHA or its agents, including:

- a. Community members using services overseen or funded by the KCRHA.
- b. Employees and contractors of the KCRHA.
- c. Providers who implement services overseen or funded by the KCRHA.

#### **VIII. Reporting**

The chief ombuds reports directly and independently to the Implementation Board on feedback trends from people living homeless, employees, providers, and other system activities and on actions undertaken in response to that feedback no less than twice per year.

#### **IX. Appointment and Removal from Office**

- a. The chief ombuds must be selected and appointed by the Implementation Board.
- b. The chief ombuds may be removed from office by the Implementation Board for neglect of duty, misconduct, inability to perform tasks, and actions or behaviors not aligned with KCRHA values.

#### **X. Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest is when an ombuds has an actual or potential interest that impairs or might impair their ability to perform their responsibilities and duties in alignment with the Ombuds Office's standards of practice.

**All Ombuds Office staff must:**

Ombuds Office of King County Regional Homelessness Authority Charter

- a. Abide by the KCRHA's Code of Ethics Policy.
- b. Report to the Implementation Board if a conflict of interest is discovered during an investigation. The Executive Committee of the Implementation Board will determine if the conflict can be managed or should be eliminated.

All Ombuds Office staff may:

- c. Participate on community and advisory committees as non-voting members unless doing so creates a conflict of interest.

**XI. Amendment or Revocation of Charter**

This charter remains in effect unless revoked. It may be amended only at the agreement of the Implementation Board.

**XII. Approval and Effective Date**

This charter is approved by:

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Chair, Implementation Board

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Clerk, Implementation Board

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Board Approval Date

## References

- American Bar Association. (2004). *Standards for the establishment and operation of ombuds offices*. Retrieved March 3, 2022, from <https://abaombudsday.files.wordpress.com/2018/09/2004-aba-resolution.pdf>.
- City of Portland. *ADM-6.01 - ombudsman's office policies & procedures*. Retrieved March 17, 2022, from <https://www.portland.gov/policies/administrative/ombudsman/adm-601-ombudsmans-office-policies-procedures>.
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## **Ombuds Office Grievance Policy**

This document sets forth the procedures for filing a grievance with the King County Regional Homelessness Authority's (KCRHA) Ombuds Office. For additional information about the Ombuds Office, please review the Ombuds Office Charter.<sup>1</sup>

The Ombuds Office will make reasonable accommodations and use alternative forms of communication to ensure that people living with disabilities or language barriers can access and benefit from the Ombuds Office services. The Office is also committed to ensuring the grievance process is accessible and responsive to groups who most experience marginalization in the homelessness response system, including trans and gender-diverse persons, people living with disabilities, people of color, immigrants, unaccompanied youth, and young adults.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Ombuds Office is to promote public confidence in KCRHA's ability to serve people experiencing homelessness effectively, efficiently, and equitably. The Ombuds Office accomplishes this by finding solutions to problems and investigating complaints involving the agencies, organizations, and individuals providing services or housing in the homelessness response system.

### **Scope**

This grievance policy applies to all individuals, organizations, and agencies that contract with the KCRHA to provide outreach, shelter, rapid rehousing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, prevention, diversion, or other housing or homelessness-related services and interventions (collectively, "homelessness services"). This policy also applies to community members who receive homelessness services, KCRHA employees, third-party contractors, and organizations and agencies that may play a role in the homelessness response system but are not funded by KCRHA.

### **Guidance on when to contact the Ombuds Office for KCRHA employees and contractors**

The Ombuds Office supplements, but does not replace, KCRHA's existing complaint resolution or appeals mechanisms. KCRHA employees and contractors are encouraged to attempt to first resolve issues by filing a complaint with a KCRHA department manager or the KCRHA chief administrative officer. If your grievance cannot be adequately addressed by a KCRHA department manager or by filing a complaint with the KCRHA Chief Administrative Office, you may contact the Ombuds Office to help resolve issues concerning situations that involve but are not limited to:

- Individuals who are seeking third-party help to address a complaint or problem.
- Individuals who are being denied housing because of a need a program would not meet.
- Third-party mediation, facilitation, or conciliation between program staff and a program resident or participant or KCRHA staff and a contractor.
- Patterns of mistreatment and potential systemic issues.
- Concerns related to working with another system agency or organization.
- Information that can help the Ombuds Office track themes that may result in system changes.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ombuds Charter can be found at [www.kcrha.org/ombuds](http://www.kcrha.org/ombuds).



## **Grievance procedure**

1. A grievance or complaint may be submitted verbally by calling 206.639.4601 or in writing by emailing [ombuds@kcrha.org](mailto:ombuds@kcrha.org). The Ombuds Office will provide an initial response to all complaints verbally or in writing within 24 to 72 hours, depending on the urgency of the request.
2. The Ombuds Office will schedule an appointment to complete an initial intake evaluation with the individual submitting the complaint (the complainant) to discuss the complaint and decide how to best resolve the problem. The complainant should be prepared to document or provide information about the incident, actions taken, dates, times, and other information that will assist the Ombuds Office in resolving the issue.
3. The Ombuds Office will first try to resolve complaints informally by providing information, referrals, assistance, and facilitation. The Ombuds Office will open an investigation if a complaint cannot be resolved using these means.
4. During the investigation, the Ombuds Office will interview parties and review supporting documentation, including incident reports or other documentation submitted by the complainant, respondent, or third parties, to determine whether sufficient evidence exists to substantiate the complaint. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Ombuds Office will issue an investigative report that includes its findings and recommendations.
5. Once the investigative report is completed, any party<sup>2</sup> may request a review of the Ombuds Office's findings, recommendations, and supporting documentation within 30 business days of the Ombuds Office's conclusion of its investigation. A committee not involved in the original investigation will review the Ombuds Office's findings, recommendations, and supporting documentation before making a decision. All review decisions will be rendered within 30 business days of the date the request to review was submitted.

## **The appeals process to review an Ombuds Office investigative decision**

1. Any party to an Ombuds Office investigation may appeal the findings and recommendations of the investigative report.
2. All requests must be received within 30 business days of the sign-off date indicated on the investigative report.
3. Once the sign-off date has been documented, the requesting party may only request a review of matters included in the original investigation. Requests to introduce additional matters not under consideration in the original investigation will be denied.

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<sup>2</sup> "Party" refers to the complainant or the respondent in an investigation.



4. The requesting party must submit requests for review of investigative findings and recommendations in writing to [ombuds@kcrha.org](mailto:ombuds@kcrha.org). Each request must address the following:
  - a. What part of the investigative findings and recommendations the requesting party would like reviewed.
  - b. An explanation of why the requesting party believes the investigative findings are incorrect.
  - c. The requesting party's preferred solution.
5. Ombuds Office appeal decisions shall be deemed the final KCRHA administrative decision for any grievance or complaint submitted to the Ombuds Office for investigation.



## **Implementation Board Officer Descriptions**

### ***Introduction:***

The Interlocal Agreement [ILA] for the King County Regional Homelessness Authority [KCRHA] outlines the structure and functions of the Implementation Board [IB] of the KCRHA. As outlined in the ILA it is the duty of the IB members to elect officers.

### ***Roles & Descriptions:***

- ❖ **Co-Chairs**
  - The IB members elects two chairpersons from its membership to serve as Co-Chairs of the board. Preference for a Co-Chair position shall be given to a member with lived experience. Both Co-Chairs have the same authority and responsibilities: to jointly preside at regular and special meetings of the IB, They can also jointly call special meetings as determined to be appropriate, and to each execute documents requiring approval of the IB. On resolutions approved by the IB only the signature of one of the co-chairs are sufficient to bind the Authority. It is the duty of the Co-Chairs to see that the transaction of IB business is in accordance with the law, ILA, and Bylaws.
- ❖ **Treasurer**
  - The Treasurer shall coordinate with Authority finance staff and provide oversight of the funds and deposits of the Authority as prescribed by the Board. In collaboration with Authority finance staff, the Treasurer shall monitor all revenues and expenses of the Authority, including those funds held by the County treasurer, and shall ensure maintenance of a complete and accurate account of all funds received and disbursed. The Treasurer will assist with the development of the budget and present a financial report of income and expenses at meetings of the Board.
- ❖ **Secretary**
  - The Secretary shall keep or authorize others to keep a full and complete record of the meetings of the Board, the meetings of committees and officers with appropriate minutes, when necessary; shall supervise the keeping of the books and other records and ledgers and other written documents comprising the business and purpose of the Authority and shall discharge such other duties as pertain to the office as prescribed by the Board.

### ***Selection & Restrictions:***

Officer terms are limited to one year in length, and officers of the IB shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the IB. There is also a restriction as outlined in the ILA, that the Co-Chairs and Treasurer may not be the same person.

# 2023 Contract Renewals

KCRHA Implementation Board  
Budget Committee

June 14, 2023



**KCRHA**  
King County Regional Homelessness Authority



# Agenda

- **Contracts and Procurement**
- **Current Status**
- **2023 RHA Contract Process**
  - Process Supports in 2023
  - Challenges in 2023
- **Next Steps for Improvement**



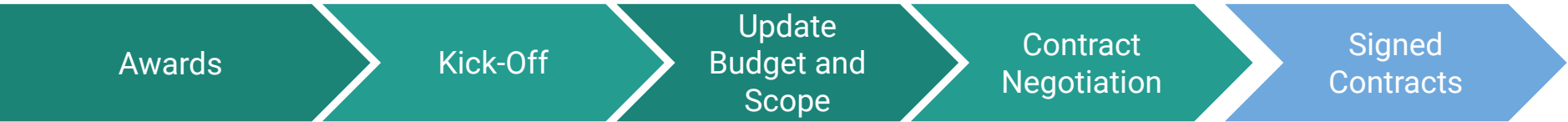
# Contracts & Procurement

- Contracts are the **core work of the agency** and the path to accountability and transforming the system
- Contracting **should be predictable and timely** for all partners
- **We recognize the need to improve** and streamline the contracting process

# Current Status

- [Dashboard for tracking progress](#)
- **210** out of 213 (99%) Contracts are Fully Executed
  - \$113 Million on contract
  - \$114,000 in contracts remaining to be executed
- **3** Contracts Remain to be executed
  - **1** contract is in KCRHA review for terms, accounting, or regulatory compliance
  - **2** contracts are in review with service providers
- KCRHA is ready to pay providers as soon as contracts are finalized
  - Average time from invoice submission to payment is **5 days**

# 10 Steps of Contracting Process



1. KCRHA's regular budget is approved and funding becomes available.

2. Award letters are sent to grantees based on approved funding

3. KCRHA hosts kick-off meeting with service providers to open their contracts in FLUXX

4. Service providers update their Budget and Scope of Work in FLUXX

5. KCRHA hosts open office hours for service providers

6. KCRHA sends contracts to service providers who have input their Budget and Scope of Work

7. Service providers review contracts

8. Service providers and KCRHA review contracts, ensure accountability and regulatory compliance, and negotiate for any changes

9. KCRHA conducts final executive review of all contracts

10. After all these steps are completed, we have a final executed contract.

Service providers have invoiced when in the final stages, even before the contract is executed

# 2023 Contract Process Supports

## ➤ Office Hours

- Twice-weekly drop-in office hours held January 29–February 24

## ➤ Increased Capacity

- KCRHA engaged a firm with homelessness funding and service expertise to assist in increasing KCRHA capacity for reviews and contract execution

## ➤ Concurrent Invoicing

- Invoicing open to providers to submit prior to final contract execution
- KCRHA staff are reviewing invoices and prepared to pay as soon as contracts are fully executed

# Challenges in 2023

## ➤ **Contract Initiation Timeline**

- KCRHA funding approved in December 2022
- KCRHA contracts were not initiated until after final funding was approved

## ➤ **Renewal Process in Fluxx was More Complicated than Anticipated**

- Contracts had to be generated manually rather than automatically by Fluxx

## ➤ **2023 Contract Boilerplate Added New Components**

- Additional time was needed to discuss new provisions with service providers

## ➤ **Vacant Positions and Hiring Challenges**

- KCRHA had 4 vacant positions in the finance and contracting teams
- Staff in these fields are in incredibly high demand in today's labor market
- It is difficult to recruit qualified staff for these positions because of this high demand

# Next Steps for Improvement

- Execute three remaining contracts as soon as possible
- Program Managers and HUD Technical Assistance held Open Office Hours for providers with federally-funded Continuum of Care Contracts
- Dedicated Technical Assistance on Fluxx Contract Management System:
  - Fixing bugs in the platform
  - Direct assistance to service providers and RHA Staff
- KCRHA Staffing
  - Budget request for additional finance staff
  - New Contracts and Compliance Manager started June 5, 2023
  - Engaged Recruiter to expedite hiring for remaining vacant positions
- Review other contract management systems as potential Fluxx replacement
- Transparency and Process Improvement
  - Invoicing dashboard in development
  - Process improvement exercise planned with providers and RHA staff for Summer 2023 to streamline and increase efficiency of contracting in preparation for 2024 contracts

# Thank You

[www.KCRHA.org](http://www.KCRHA.org)  
[info@kcrha.org](mailto:info@kcrha.org)

Find us on LinkedIn, Facebook,  
Twitter, and Instagram